

Fenian Raid

1866



WITH
Lieut.-Col. J. Stoughton Dennis
At Fort Erie
June 2



BY
STEPHEN BEATTY
Late Corporal W. C. F. B.



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INTRODUCTION.

After nearly forty - four years of silence, I consider it wise to present to the public the inner history of the Fenian Raid of 1866, where an incompetent military officer was entrusted with the lives of a small body of men, and, who by failure in the performance of a sacred duty, may prove a wholesome and useful lesson to commanders of troops in the field.

STEPHEN BEATTY,
Late Corporal of the Welland
Canal Field Battery.

St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada,
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The Fenian Raid, 1866

With Lieut.-Col. Dennis at Fort
Erie, June 2.

FROM time to time I have been asked to place before the public my personal experiences and recollections of the Fenian Raid of 1866, in which I had the privilege—if not the pleasure—in taking a part. Shortly after the occurrences that took place early in June, 1866, pamphlets were prepared and circulated touching, or presumably touching, on the operations along the Niagara frontier. Some of those pamphlets were entirely astray regarding the movements of the Welland Canal Field Battery and Naval Brigade of Dunnville on that memorable June 2, which brought both corps into public notoriety.

No person, excepting he who was engaged in those operations, could give a correct statement as to facts as they were.

In taking the matter up I do it with considerable timidity, as, not being an historian, nor yet a story writer, I am afraid it will fall far short of your expectations,

I would much prefer that it fell into more able hands than mine to do this work, but as all of the commissioned officers, and the large majority of the non-commissioned officers and men, have passed away, and but a small number of the survivors remain, if the sketch is not soon written the history of the "Dennis Expedition" will be lost.

The survivors of that expedition are scattered broadcast, so that individual opinion cannot be obtained. Representatives of the Battery will be found in California, Colorado,

Oregon, Wisconsin, Michigan, New York and all point of the United States; Manitoba and other portions of the Dominion.

Before going to the main issue, it will be necessary to go back a pace and see how we stand, so that the reader will be better prepared for the realization of warfare as it was.

Though there had been a system of militia long in force, it did not take tangible form until some months after the Confederate States of America sought to secure their freedom from the United States of America to form a Republic on its own platform and laws.

In 1861 the flag of England had been insulted by a naval officer of the United States, when two of the Confederate States' commissioners, Messrs. Sliddell and Mason, were ruthlessly made prisoners, taken from the British mail steamer "*Trent*" and were confined in a United States fortress at Boston.

It is needless to go over the story of the liberation, suffice to say that the insult was as keenly felt in Canada as in the Home country.

Among the first to organize was the Welland Canal Field Battery to resent this insult. The main object was to protect the Welland Canal from destruction if war should follow, and, secondly, to go wherever their services were required. The battery was equipped with four muzzle loading brass pieces of artillery, and non-commissioned officers belonging to the British army, skilled in the artillery drill, were loaned to teach the recruits in artillery and other tactics. It was not until 1864 that the real foundation for a volunteer militia force was laid, and subsequently it had not gained much progress.

In 1864 the St. Albans Raid took place. That is, a body of Confederate States refugees, who made their temporary homes in the city of Montreal, went into the village of St. Albans, in the State of Vermont, and raided a bank, committing murder and safely returned to Montreal.

In 1861 the Hon. W. H. Seward, Secretary of State for the United States, after a parlay with Lord Palmerston, the then Premier of Great Britain and Ireland, issued an order for the liberation of Messrs. Mason and Sliddell to the British custody, and in 1864 that Secretary of State demanded from the Government of Upper and Lower Canada the surrender of the raiders, but after a trial before Judge Coursell at Montreal, the prisoners were set free and Seward's request was not complied with, which greatly angered that official.

The Canadian Militia, of that period, anticipated war and made their preparations accordingly.

THE FENIAN BROTHERHOOD.

Unhappy Ireland! Unfortunate Ireland! The land where, if their antagonism of sect and race were obliterated, would be the bright jewel of the British Empire. Whether it is the climate, the nature of the soil and atmosphere, or unknown cause, the Irish at home are not a united people. In the British army and navy will be found no better fighting men for the supremacy of Britain, and some of the ablest army and navy commanders have been and are Irish by birth. The late Boer war shows that. When an Irishman comes to Canada or the United States he lives in peace and harmony, as a rule, with his brother Irishman, no matter from what part he comes.

It was in the year 1864 that Fenianism—or rebellion against Great Britain—was introduced in the city of Dublin, the capital of Ireland, and even at the first meeting of the Brotherhood they were not agreed as to their purpose, if history be correctly stated, for benches were overturned and chairs were used to belabor the other fellow.

It will not be out of place here to present to you two extracts from the life of Lord Dufferin, one of the greatest Governors-General Canada ever had.

EXTRACT No. 1.

AS A LANDLORD.

Lord Dufferin was an Irishman through and through. As a landlord at a dinner given by him to his agent, Mr. John H. Howe, on December 30, 1847, at Newlownands. For a young man just come of age, it was no small effort of common sense and eloquence. The toast to which he was to reply was "Lord Dufferin and the impoverished landlord of Ireland." and the orator in his reply led off with the remark that "an Irish landlord was unlike any other landlord under the sun."

"He lives in a peculiar atmosphere of his own, the daily conditions of his life and the occasional conditions of his death are totally dissimilar to those of any other man. He is a complete genius of himself, an erratic body in the social system. (Laughter). He may be described as an individual who does not get rent, as a well-dressed gentleman who may be shot with impunity, the legitimate target of the immediate neighbor, a superficial index by which to mark the geographical direction of the under current of assassination, a cause of bewilderment to coroners and of vague verdicts, distracted jurors, a subject for newspaper paragraphs and a startling text for leading articles."

EXTRACT No. 2.

STATE OF IRELAND IN 1864.

"During his few months sojourn in the War Office, Lord Dufferin was called upon to reply for the Government in an important debate (on March 16) on the state of Ireland."

"The Fenian movement was then beginning to make headway and to excite widespread disaffection. With a view of drawing the government, Earl Gray invited a debate, and towards the end of his speech moved a series of twelve resolutions, the first in favor of an Irish Parliament, and the last two in favor of the improvement of agriculture and land tenure. All the other resolutions were directed

against the church of the minority, being regarded as the Established Church of Ireland."

"It was natural that the government should put up a representative Irishman out of their own ranks to reply, and it was natural that the Irishman should lead off with a bit of chaff. Lord Dufferin compared Lord Gray and his unexpected twelve resolutions to an American duelist who, first, concealing a twelve-barrelled revolver about his person, engaged his antagonist in friendly converse and then suddenly discharge his weapon at him through his pocket. Lord Dufferin frankly said he did not pose as the advocate or the apologist of the Established Church system in Ireland and to a great deal of what had fallen from the noble Earl, he felt disposed to agree, but, he added, that the presence of the Established Church had nothing to do with the existing disaffection which was mainly of a Fenian character. Lord Dufferin also avowed himself in favor of improving the law dealing with the relations between landlord and tenant. As to immigration he clearly disposed of the allegation that the large emigration that had taken place of late years was due to evictions. He cited on good authority a dictum that in 1841 five persons were engaged in the cultivation of the soil in Ireland where only two persons were similarly engaged in England, though at the same time the total agricultural produce of England was exactly four times the total of the agricultural produce of Ireland."

"The real foundation on which, in Ireland, the whole fabric of the state system rested was the potato. The poorest peasant can always find a patch of mountain, where he can grow his favorite vegetable; there were always stone and mud at hand; out of which to construct a cabin; there was always a bog near, to cut turf from; there was a handsome girl, to make him the father of twelve children in a dozen years, and there was always the domestic pig to pay the rent. Potatoes, pigs and children were propagated in a highly agreeable and free-hearted manner."

"Other facts were brought forward by the speaker to show that immigration was not the evil it was often described, as 'within sixteen years of its commencement, the people who had left their own home, almost in the guise of paupers, had actually earned enough to remit to their friends in the old country £12,000,000—\$60,000,000. The density of population in Ireland was one hundred and eighty-one per square mile (181), this being greater than that of any European country; wages had risen, crime had diminished and Ireland had even outstripped England in its progress in agricultural wealth. Fenianism was the last wave of Irish discontent, and the Irish nation, Lord Dufferin averred in conclusion, was essentially loyal and contented, spite of a 'National hostility' to England among the lowest class."

'What they demand is your sympathy, the actual presence of yourselves, your wives and your daughters moving among them in their villages, active in the promotion of charity, thus convincing the people that you regard them as your fellow countrymen and Ireland as your country.'

FENIANISM IN AMERICA

The movement of Fenianism that had its origin in Ireland did not rest there. The Brotherhood of Fenians found its way to the Federal States of America, where so many of the brave sons of Ireland had entered the army to aid in crushing the rebellions or Confederate States. On account of so large a number of Irishmen being in the United States army, the government of that country paid little or no attention to prevent the Fenian movement from taking root on their soil.

The head centre or "inner circle" had its headquarters in the city of New York, but centres were organized in Oswego, Ogdensburg, Buffalo, Erie, Cleveland, Toledo, Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Louis, Cincinnati and other points in the interior.

Circulars were issued and spread broadcast that funds were required to make purchases of

firearms, ammunition and other supplies for the Irish army that was to liberate Ireland from her persecutors, the hated English.

The Irish or the discontented Irish and the descendents of Irish, male and female, from their hard earned wages, contributed to the fund, and the officers of the inner circle were living on the fat of the land at the poor people's expense.

Mr. Roberts was the president and from him and his council-of-war all orders and proclamations were issued.

It did not take long before there was money in the treasury, but thus far no movement was made towards purchases of ammunition of war.

The ranks of the army were being well supplied with recruits, but the time had not arrived when war should be declared against England and her colonies.

Among the Americans who contributed to the Irish fund, it was averred that the Hon. W. H. Seward, Secretary of State of the United States had donated quite a sum for the fair that was held in Chicago in the fall of 1864, but whether the report was authentic is not directly known; we leave it as told.

CLOSE OF THE REBELLION

The greatest fratricidal war of any age was brought to a close in the early months of 1865, after four years of desperate fighting in which thousands of lives on both sides were lost, many others were maimed for life and millions and millions of dollars were spent in that gigantic struggle. The Southern or Confederate States were subjugated by lack of supplies and by being outnumbered, but they were not crushed to death.

By the termination of hostilities the need for vast armies had vanished. The citizen or volunteer soldiers were no further required and a general mustering out of hundreds of thousands of men who had made war their trade were thus thrown on the generosity of the

people to provide them with employment or other means of support.

From military to civil life once more was not agreeable to many of those men and large bodies of them were scattered throughout the length and breadth of the land seeking supplies from citizens at all points.

This was a great time for the Fenian army. The ranks were increased in large numbers and the time was soon coming when the strike for Irish freedom was to take place.

ARMS, AMMUNITION, ETC.

At the conclusion of the war and in addition to the supplies of arms and ammunition belonging to the Federal army, the large quantities given up by the Confederates there was now no further use. The United States had no quarrel with any of the Powers and the government was ready and willing to sell such war material to any and everybody that wanted to purchase. This was a good time and at small cost for the Fenian Brotherhood to acquire what was lacking in their movement, except money. But the ill advised Irishmen and Irishwomen came to the rescue and supplied funds to carry out the project. Though the government of the United States knew there was such an organization as the Fenian Brotherhood, nothing was done to curtail their movements.

1865

Angry words had been spoken against Canada by the Brotherhood, and the government of Upper and Lower Canada became convinced that a demonstration would be made against these provinces in the near future, and detachments of the Volunteer Militia were sent to Windsor, Chatham, Amherstburg and other points. The large numbers of troops sent out by the British Government, owing to the "Trent" affair, still remained in the country. General Michel was in command of the east and General Napier in the west.

The Welland Canal Field Battery, as before

stated, was doing its part to perfect itself should hostilities arise. It was divided into the right and left wings. The right wing was at Port Robinson, the left wing at Port Colborne, twelve miles away. The field pieces, two at Port Robinson and two at Port Colborne with ammunition wagons, harness, etc., were housed in wooden sheds made from boards one inch thick and enclosed. Lieutenant Colonel Villiers, the Artillery Brigade Major of the district was very anxious about the safety of those implements of war, and had, on several occasions, recommended to his superior officers the need of placing sentries at those two places, for it would be easy work to destroy the buildings by fire or easy to gain access to spike the guns and to destroy the harness. But to each report no attention was paid and it rested with the Brigade Major to decide what course he would pursue.

This was a delicate point for him to determine. If he took no steps for the safety of government stores he was liable to receive censure, if he took the responsibility of protection he was also liable to be censured. At last he took the authority upon himself and the

GUNS, HARNESS, ETC.

were shipped to Hamilton, which was not only his headquarters, but also a considerable force of the British Army was stationed and where they could be properly housed and safe guarded. This now left the Battery in a quandary. They were no longer artillerymen, but small arms, such as rifles and carbines would be the instruments in which they were to receive their education. The non-commissioned officer of the British army, who was the instructor, Bombardier James McCracken, had received his schooling not only in artillery, but in rifle, carbine and sword exercise so he put the men through a general course of training. These drills were kept up constantly during the winter and on March 8, 1866,

THE BATTERY WAS CALLED OUT
FOR SERVICE.

It was a bright winter morning when orders arrived for the battery to be prepared for active service. Though this order had been expected for some time, no definite arrangements had been made. After two days of delay, for the men expected they would be sent to Lower Canada and the French Canadians be sent to Upper Canada, definite word was received on the 10th for the right wing to join the left wing at Port Colborne and to be stationed at that point. Port Colborne was at the head of the Welland Canal and was greatly in need of protection, for, should the lift and guard locks there become deranged or destroyed that great waterway between the west and east would be useless and great damage would follow, not only in wealth, but in a commercial way. With the Welland Battery thus joined together and armed with carbines of 300 yards range came the Rifle Company of Collingwood, the Rifle Company of Whitby, the Rifle Company of Cobourg and the Rifle Company of Columbus. The commander of this garrison was Lieutenant Colonel Stephen of Collingwood. The men were put in billets at Port Colborne and at a village about one mile north called Stone Bridge, now Humberstone. The troops were actively engaged in drill day after day, and on the evening of the 16th, the eve of St. Patrick's the natal day of Ireland, word was received that an attack would be made to destroy the Welland Canal. This word caused a commotion; all of the troops were placed for duty; sentries were stationed at intervals throughout the village and pickets were stationed two miles out to the north, the east and the west.

But the night passed without trouble, so did the 17th, 18th and 19th days and nights, the troops all being under arms during that period and on the 20th the order was relaxed to routine work which was kept until April 20th, when orders were received for the garrison to break up the following day and the men to be dis-

missed. During those days and nights in March scare times the snow was very deep on the ground and the weather was extremely cold so that a good many of the men were frost bitten.

QUIETUDE.

When the men of the battery were released from duty it was with the understanding that they might be called upon at any time and for them to be prepared to take the field at a moment's notice. As a large proportion of the men were farmers they were glad of relief so they could sow their grain and plant their seeds. The mechanic was glad for he could better supply his family with the necessities of life and the remainder were pleased so that they could follow their various walks in life and the sailors shipped on Schooners and steamers to ply the Great Lakes. As for myself I was out of employment entirely and must look for something to do.

THE FENIANS AGAIN.

Though there were many rumors of a Fenian invasion, no attention was paid to them. It had become an old story. There was a rupture in Fenian ranks so it was said. Mr. Stephens, who had been put in prison in Ireland, for treason, made good his escape, reaching France safely and had reached New York. Here Mr. Roberts was the head centre, one of those men wanted to attack Canada, while the other wanted to strike in Ireland. Still firearms and munitions of war were being purchased, and in the dying days of May, large numbers of strangers, supposed to be Fenians or sympathisers in their movements, arrived in Buffalo. General Barry at that point had issued orders that no passes for outgoing steamers, vessels or boats should be issued between the hours of 6 p.m. until the following day at 6 a.m.

CONTRACTOR WOOD.

It was the evening of May 31, Wm. Wood who owned and operated a steam dredge, had a contract for excavating earth in the Niagara river, north of Black Rock, N. Y. The day's

work had been finished and his dredge had been taken to a dock, or wharf, at Black Rock, where she was tied to snubbing posts. Wm. Wood told this himself when he was a contractor on the Welland Canal, in 1887. All the employees had left the dredge, he alone remaining to fix up. While he was thus employed a body of men dressed in civilians clothes but armed with Springfield rifles came up and wanted to negotiate for the use of his dredge, but not for dredging purposes. These men, were no doubt Fenians, and he was not going to let them have it, if he did he might not get it again, and if he allowed them to take it he would be a party to their crime, so he cut the tying ropes and the current took him down stream. Whether Mr. Wood lost his presence of mind or did not, or could not lower the anchors, he did not say, but he was moving down stream, and what might be the result he did not know. The United States war steamer *Michigan*, which was patrolling Niagara river to prevent any infraction of International law, was coming up stream. Mr. Wood stood on the front part of his dredge, thought those on board the war vessel were going to fire on him, sang out at the top of his voice, "For God sake don't fire," I'm a good United States citizen. This was heard on board the steamer, and the dredge was taken in tow once more and was moved to the dock and a small detachment of marines was placed on her for safety.

BREAKING THE LAW.

Though the order had been issued that no passes were to be issued, between 6 p.m. and the following day at 6 a.m., this was not heeded for sometime during the late hours of May 31 and the early hours of June 1, flat boats with steam tugs, with bodies of men steamed out of Buffalo and the

FENIANS WERE IN CANADA.

The Buffalo, Brantford and Goderich Railway Company had taken the precaution to move all its rolling stock from Fort Erie previous to May 31, and the large steam ferry-boat *International* employed to take cars, etc., between

Fort Erie and Buffalo was called off the route to be put in safe quarters. The Fenians landed in Canada early in the morning, their first move being to cut the telegraph wires, but not so quick as to prevent the telegraph operator to announce their arrival. Then the Fenian army that had arrived without a commissary, skirmished for supplies, and small parties went in various directions to secure provisions.

MRS. ANDERSON.

As soon as possible the citizens of Fort Erie fled for protection. Some had left their homes the previous day, as they had been warned that an invasion would take place about June 1, so that on this bright morning, Fort Erie was a deserted village. Even the majority of farmers with their families sought shelter elsewhere, than at their own homes. There was one courageous woman, who looked on her home as her kingdom, which she would not forsake. This lady was Mrs. Anderson, the widow of a clergyman, who had been Rector of the Parish of Fort Erie.

After the Fenian Army had pillaged a bit they set fire to a bridge, known as Saeurwine, which was partially destroyed. In the afternoon and evening they settled down on the Newbigging farm along the Niagara river where they used the rails of fences to form breastworks, and in their locating on the place the growing grain and grass were trampled under foot, making it look desolate. Another of the residents along the river road, like Mrs. Anderson, kept possession of his estate. This gentleman was Mr. Beam, who owned a fine property.

On the morning of June 2 the Fenian Army moved westward and took up a fine position near the garrison and ridge roads; having located favorable grounds, and with boulders and trees preparing breastworks, they had the advantage of the selection of the grounds for attack and defence. It is not intended to say anything about the battle of Ridgeway only that it was a lamentable occurrence and did not bring lustre on the part of some of those who were engaged

in it. The Thorold Company of Infantry that had been billeted at Stone Bridge the previous night, and had marched to Port Colborne to take part in an expedition by water, finding that there was no boat to take them, went to Ridgeway and covered the retreat; Colonel Booker's command fell back on Port Colborne.

THE CALL TO ARMS

When the message by telegraph was sent broadcast that the Fenians had crossed the river Niagara and were in Fort Erie, by the operator at that place, there were hurried orders for the Volunteer Militia to go to the front. The frontier had been left unguarded, so that the enemy had taken possession without opposition. The Royal Canadian Regiment of Rifles had lookout parties at points along railroads leading to the frontier, but they were mainly employed in searching the trains to take into custody deserters from the British Army, but not as a body for offensive or defensive purposes, merely lookouts.

The news spread like wildfire and many false reports were circulated. I had just rented a grist mill at Byng, on the south shore of the Grand river, having just taken possession that morning. I had closed up a business at Port Robinson on March 8 in flour and feed and now I have just embarked in another venture and had engaged a miller. While we were at work, about 6 a. m., a member of the Dunnville Rifle Company in uniform and with his rifle came to the door, telling me that the Fenians had invaded the country at Fort Erie, that they had shot dead Dr. Kempson, the Reeve of that village, and many other things. It appeared to me it was another false rumor, for, as I had left Port Robinson a few days previous, if there was anything afloat, Capt. King would notify me. However, I crossed the dam and went to the telegraph office in Dunnville to know if a message was there for me, there was none, I returned to the mill, but shortly afterwards retraced my steps to Dunnville, still no word. The citizens of the village were wild with terror.. One civilian sent a telegram to

Ottawa, saying that if one hundred stand of arms were forwarded he would raise that number of men for service. Probably there were many others throughout Canada that did like this man. I returned to the mill and then to my boarding house for breakfast. I again crossed the river to Dunnville, and no orders having arrived, I telegraphed to know if the battery was called out, and to what point I was to report. About an hour later I received a reply ordering me to Port Colborne. I at once procured a conveyance and crossed the dam to the mill and paid my miller his months' wages, \$35, though he had worked but a few hours. I surrendered the mill key to the owner, paid my board, and putting on my uniform and taking a few necessary articles with me, returned to Dunnville and paid Goodwin Sparling one dollar for his horse. At the railway depot I could gain no definite information at about what time a railway train would come from the West. Capt. Lachlan McCallum, Commander of the Naval Brigade of Dunnville, and Major Samuel Amsden, of the 37th Haldimand Rifle Battalion, were waiting for orders to move. Shortly before four p.m. a train from the west arrived at the station, and there was a large crowd of the village people and surrounding country to witness its arrival. This railway train was filled with armed men, who debarked and marched to the main part of the village. This was Lieutenant-Colonel Alfred Booker and his troops, composed of the 13th Battalion of Hamilton Infantry, and the York Company of Rifles. On enquiry from the conductor of the train, he informed me that his orders were to go no further east because there was danger, and here, were my orders to go east, because there was danger. I certainly was in a fix, however, as I had some money and no near relatives to be dependent on me, all of them, father, mother, three sisters and two brothers, all dead. I went to a livery stable kept by a man named Root, who could supply me with a horse, buggy, and a driver, but he must have twenty dollars (\$20) for the trip. The distance from Dunnville to Port Colborne was

and is twenty-two miles. I paid him his price and off I started, reaching the village of Marshville. I came in contact with a large number of farmers with their families in all manner of vehicles, and some people were driving cattle. In the waggon, besides the farmer and family they carried household goods, and they were seeking places of safety. From none of those people, could I gain other information than the Fenians were in Canada, but where, not one of them could tell.

Nearing Port Colborne the driver stopped his horse, as he heard brass band music, and he wanted to go no further, but on assuring him it was British he pushed on. I did not know whether it was British or something else, as I was not brought up with a musical ear. We arrived in Port Colborne alright, and after seeing that the horse was taken care of and giving orders to feed him, and the driver to get his supper, I reported to Capt. King, and informed him the cause of my delay. I then went to a small building near the elevator and secured an Enfield rifle, but there were no cartridge boxes nor rifle cap pouches. I tightened my waist belt and put the cartridges inside my tunic, and the rifle caps in my tunic pocket. There was a great shortage in the supply of rifle bayonets, and no haversacks to carry provisions; and, now when we may require his services the most, our surgeon did not respond for duty. That officer had not reported for duty in the spring campaign, but from what cause, I do not know. Others of our battery who reported later on in the evening had to be contented with carbines of 300 yards range. The battery's headquarters were on the street immediately to the east of the lift lock and swing bridge. We were not at full strength as a number of our men were too far away to reach Port Colborne in time for this action.

ARRIVAL OF BOOKER AND AKERS.

Lieutenant-Colonel J. Stoughton Dennis, temporary in command and the Queen's Own Rifle Battalion, of Toronto, had arrived in Port Colborne, along with the right wing of the battery

from Port Robinson early in the day. About mid-night a train of cars reached that place; this train had Lieutenant-Colonel Booker and his men, who had stopped in the afternoon at Dunnville and as the hour was too late to secure billets the men slept in the cars. Lieutenant-Colonel Booker being the senior officer, took command of the garrison. About the time of the arrival of Lieutenant-Colonel Booker another officer arrived; this was Captain Charles Akers, R. E., who had been sent from Chippawa to assist the commander at Port Colborne. The ferry steamer *International*, that had been taken off her route between Fort Erie and Buffalo, was expected at Port Colborne to take troops and to patrol the Niagara river. Lieut.-Col. Booker had seen Captain McCallum at Dunnville and was aware that that officer was ready for service. A conference took place between Booker, Dennis and Akers, so when the *International* did not come into Port telegraph communications passed between Booker and McCallum, the latter stated that himself, his tug, the *W. T. Robb*, and as many of his men as he could collect at that late hour, would reach Port Colborne at dawn, June 2.

Of course we non-commissioned officers and men of the battery knew not what was to be our position, whether we were going, or if we were to remain in Port Colborne to guard it. But a few hours later we were enlightened as to our future movements, in part. A fog hung over the waters of Lake Erie, and there were no ships in the harbor. Just at the peep of day the tug *Robb* came into the harbor, blowing her whistle to announce her arrival. She was tied up at the foot of the lock and Captain McCallum disembarked. A few minutes later the steam whistle of the locomotive blew, and Lieut.-Col. Booker and his command, which was strengthened by the Queen's Own Battalion of Toronto, steamed out for Ridgeway. The Welland Battery was ordered to march, and at their head were Lieut.-Col. Dennis and Captain Akers. This was a surprise; Dennis had forsaken the Queen's Own to go on a naval expedition, and Captain Akers did not go with Booker to aid that officer.

THE EXPEDITION.

Perhaps the word expedition is not proper. It certainly was not a cruise, as the sequel will show. It may not be out of place here to give the names of those who took part in this trip and subsequent events: Lieutenant - Colonel J. Stoughten Dennis. Commander; Captain Charles Akers, R.E., Assistant Commander.

WELLAND CANAL FIELD BATTERY.

Captain R. S. King, M. D., commander; First Lieutenant, A. K. Scholfield; Second Lieutenant, C. B. Nemmo; Sergeant-Major, Richard Boyle, Farrier Sergeant, Isaac Pew; Q. M. Sergeant, A. H. Morin; Sergeant James Coleman, Sergeant Thomas J. O'Neil, Sergeant Thomas Sowersby, Sergeant Gideon Grisdale; Corporal Stephen Beatty, Corporal James H. Boyle, Corporal William Reavley, Corporal Villroy McKee; Trumpeter John Waters; Privates S. S. Radcliff, J. R. Boyle, T. J. Boyle, Fergus Scholfield, John Bradley, John Harbison, R. J. Thomas, Charles Campbell, William H. Clarke, Robert Armstrong, William Pope, Reuben Mosher, Emerson Peart, Edward Bradley, H. Nelson Higgins, Richard Higgins, Robert J. Grisdale, Henry Cole, Robert Offspring, J. Ward Hagar, Jacob Garner, Joseph Reavley, Mathias Matthews, Francis Matthews, A. Vanalstine, J. Buchner, S. Dickinson, Isaac Dickinson, Patrick Roach, John Cook, William Cook, Samuel Cook, John Graybiel, Morris Weaver, William Broom, Edward Armstrong, John Carr, George A. Jordan, A. Pattinson and Bombardier James McCracken, Royal Artillery Drill Instructor.

NAVAL BRIGADE OF DUNNVILLE.

Capt. L. McCallum, Commander; First Lieut. W. T. Robb, who was also the master of tug *W. T. Robb*; Second Lieut. Angus Macdonald; mariners, Thomas Arderlay, Reuben Wynne, Abraham Thewlis, James H. Gamble, John E. Scott, Archibald Galbraith, William Calbeck, G. B. McGee, William Brennan, Thomas Carlisle, William Edgar, James Hall, Martin Upper, William Hannah, S. Miller, Frank Lattimore, W. McQuatty, Ed. Brown, Harry Neff.

ON THE MOVE.

Shortly after the departure of the train that took Lieut.-Col. Booker from Port Colborne, the tug *Robb* steamed out of Port Colborne harbor. It was an early start and but few of the village people were moving when the movement was made. The fog had settled over the waters, but soon after the sun made its appearance it disappeared. The previous night being chilly, all of the men wore their great coats, and we were still wearing them. The red sun gave indications that the day was to be hot; it proved so, in more ways than from Old Sol. The water was smooth, not a ripple, only what the tug made, and looking in all directions not a sign of sail, steam or smoke could be seen. The *Robb* had apparently the whole of Lake Erie to herself. The men of this expedition had left Port Colborne without breaking their fast, so had the *Queen's Own*, and perhaps the others were in a like condition. Looking for victuals was not thought of. Here and there along the Canadian shore could be seen smoke issuing from the chimneys, to let us know the cook was up and doing. Though we had three Cooks in our battery, none of them knew how to cook vittuals. Everything went along smoothly until we were approaching the head of the Niagara river, and upon the United States shore, large numbers of people could be observed, though they did not know the mission of the steam tug. To avoid their knowing there was an armed body of men on board, the non-commissioned officers and men were ordered to go below deck. The happiest man of the crowd was John Bradley; little did he know that before many hours he would be in great agony. It's the soldiers lot to suffer sometimes. The men were kept below deck for some time. Steaming down the Niagara river, a steam yacht passed us going in the opposite direction; later on the United States war steamer, *Michigan* was headed up stream, and the Commander, Capt. Bryson, made inquiries as to the object of the *Robb* being on those waters, and receiving a satisfactory reply, she was allowed to proceed on her journey. There were no visible signs of

the enemy on shore, and at Black Creek, about seven miles north of Fort Erie, the tug was stopped at a dock.

COLONEL PEACOCKE.

Colonel Peacocke, of H. M. 16th regiment of Foot, had been appointed by General Napier to take command of the forces on the Niagara Frontier, moved with his force from Hamilton by way of the Great Western Railway, and at St. Catharines he was joined by the 19th Lincoln Battalion, Lieut.-Col. the Hon. J. G. Currie, Commander, and the St. Catharines Garrison Artillery, Capt. George Stoker, Commander, reaching Clifton, where No. 4 (Port Dalhousie) Company, 19th Battalion, Capt. John S. Clark, was left with the Clifton Company, Capt. S. Barnett, Commander, to guard the Suspension Bridge, and marched to Chippawa, where he rested for the night. The following morning, leaving Capt. Stoker and the St. Catharines Garrison Artillery to guard the swing bridge at that village, and marched along the river bank as far as Black Creek, when he moved towards the interior, reaching a point about two and one-half miles from Fort Erie late in the evening.

Col. Peacocke had arranged to meet the officer commanding the Port Colborne division at a point called Stevensville, but owing to the volunteer force having no cooking utensils he was delayed about an hour at Chippawa so they could get breakfast, and he was unable to form the junction with Lieut.-Col. Booker at the appointed time. He had not yet learned on reaching Stevensville, of the disaster to Lieut. Col. Booker and his return to Port Colborne.

THE ROBB AGAIN.

As the *Robb* had reached the dock this body of men was moving, as stated, the rear guard was just then wheeling to the right, being a company of the 19th Battalion, Lincoln, Lieut. Edwin I. Parnell in charge, who informed Lieut.-Col. Dennis that it was Col. Peacocke's Command, but that officer was far in the advance, and no communication could be held with him. The

words "All Aboard" were given and the *Robb* was going up stream. What will be the next move? Just wait and you will know. We went up stream at a good pace, and reached Fort Erie, where we were ordered to disembark. The day had turned hot, so we gave our great coats into the custody of Orange Schryer and Charles Treble, Custom House Officers, to keep for us. Those two officers were on duty, but there was no duty to perform, as all intercourse at this point between the United States and Canada had been cut off.

THE LANDING AND AFTER

When the men had disposed of their great coats, other movements had to be made. Not a living soul could be seen on the streets, no one was moving, it was apparently a deserted village, or, if there were any inhabitants, they kept themselves under cover. The telegraph wires were strewn on the streets, and there were other indications that no friends of peace had been recently in the village. Lieut.-Col Dennis was anxious to know if the enemy was in the place, so he told off his men into small squads, and for them to make a reconnoitre, apparently it was a foolish move, but no one was injured. During those operations eleven men, who could not, or would not, give a satisfactory account of themselves, were taken into custody and lodged in the village lock-up. They were arrested as suspects, though unarmed, for they might carry news to the Fenian army.

Mr. Heemans, the British Counsel at Buffalo, had telegraphed to the Canadian Military Authorities that the Fenians had crossed into Canada with four pieces of artillery, which was afterwards found to be incorrect.

The reconnoiterers were called in, and now came an unlooked for event. We were not to again become marines, but landsmen. What the object of the commander's next move was, no one but himself could conjecture. We were 70 strong all told, exclusive of the officers, poorly equipped for land service, and without

having had anything to eat since the previous evening. Col. Dennis struck a new idea. He would make two divisions and scour the country from Fort Erie northward, the *Robb* in the meantime was to float down stream to render aid if necessary. The men were told off, Col. Dennis taking the right division and Capt. Akers, R. E., the left division. In the first were Capt. King and Lieut. Scholfield, acting as subalterns, and with Capt. Akers were Capt. McCallum, Lieuts. Nimmo and Macdonald. Lieut. Robb remained on the tug to command her.

THE MARCH

Lieut.-Col. Dennis with his body of men were to march along and close by the river bank, and Capt. Akers was to march along the interior, but to be in hail each of them, if required. There were no outposts, no skirmishers to feel for the enemy. The men marched almost as if on parade, but here and there a house would be visited to see if any suspicious person, or looking as such, were within. At one place where Capt. King went in, he found a man in bed with the bed clothes over him. Capt. King at once took him in charge before the man could reach his revolver from his pocket. This man gave his name as Daniel Drummond. The Newbigging farm was passed as heretofore mentioned. At a considerable distance along the river road was approaching a man on horse back, but whether a rifle or stick that was laying across the horse's back, was not known until his near approach. It was a crutch and the man had lost a foot. He was riding a fine black beast; he was halted, questioned and was allowed to proceed. There is no doubt but that he was a Fenian spy, and as such could report the diminutive force that was marching. During the march both bodies took into custody thirty-eight men, and, with the eleven in the lock-up at Fort Erie, made a grand total of forty-nine. The two forces met at Black Creek, where the *Robb* was fastened to the dock. The prisoners were put under deck, the men of all ranks re embarked and once more steamed up the river.

IN FORT ERIE AGAIN

Once more the *Robb* reached the dock at Fort Erie and once more the men were placed on shore, but for what purpose no one seemed to know, I hardly think Lieut.-Col. Dennis had yet solved the riddle himself. The village was apparently the same as when we left it a few hours previously. The men were formed in line, two deep, lengthwise of the dock and were called to attention.

The hour was now approaching four o'clock in the afternoon, and yet there was no prospect of securing something to eat, in that respect officers and men shared alike. While we were standing to "Attention," a man on horseback was approaching as fast as his horse could go; reining up his horse at the edge of the dock, he inquired, who commands this company? Capt. King came forward and introduced him to the commander. The horseman was Lewis Palmer, a worthy and respected farmer of Bertie Township, and with whom Capt. King was well acquainted. Mr. Palmer informed Lieut.-Col. Dennis, that he had better embark his men, and move out into the river at a safe distance from the shore, for the Fenian army to the strength of at least eight hundred would be in the village in less than twenty minutes. Four of our men had been told off to stand sentry over the prisoners who were down in the hold of the tug, and to see that none of them escaped. This left the force on shore to number sixty-six, non-commissioned officers and men, to take chances with the enemy, excluding the officers.

CAPTAIN AKERS, R. E.

By some means Capt. Akers secured a horse and buggy, and he started on a reconnoitering expedition, on his own account; this was the last time we set eyes on this officer during the day. He drove towards the lake shore, and, as he afterwards said, a body of the enemy came between him and Col. Dennis, and it was impossible for him to join the force, so he pushed forward and reached Port Colborne that evening, having

quenched a small fire at a bridge on his journey. On his arrival at Port Colborne Lieut.-Col. Booker was so upset at his failure to defeat the enemy in the early part of the day, that he turned his command over to Capt. Akers.

THE FIGHT.

It now became apparent that Lieut.-Col. Dennis was bent on having his own way; he would take no orders, no advice from a mere civilian, he was a soldier and knew his duty. He gave orders for a small squad of the battery to proceed to the lock-up and bring the prisoners that had been placed in custody in the morning. While those men were gone in performance of orders another messenger arrived on the ground; this man was named Sexsmith, a farmer also of Bertie Township.

Mr. Sexsmith corroborated what Mr Palmer said, that the enemy would reach the village in a few minutes, and "there was no use of dilly-dallying, but to get his men on the boat at once and shove out, for if you don't do it you will all be killed." Even at this Lieut.-Col. Dennis was stubborn, he imagined that the men who were approaching were of the same material as those who had been taken into custody during the day, that they were a mere rabble, bent on plunder and nothing more. Had that officer been informed of the setback the Canadian Volunteers had at Ridgeway in the morning, he might have paid attention to good advice. The eleven prisoners were brought down from the lock-up and placed below deck with their fellow-prisoners. The officers and men were now directed to embark, but no sooner was that order executed, than it was countermanded. The men were again formed in line as heretofore, and then orders were given to march, wheel, march and having gone about one hundred yards, counter-march and halt on the roadside abreast of the dock. The commander stood at the

right of his company, the other officers to the rear, Lieut.-Col. Dennis crossed to the sidewalk, and looking in a southerly direction saw a body of the enemy approaching from the lake shore; this was the force Capt. Akers, R.E., mentioned. While Lieut.-Col. Dennis was oblivious, the men in the ranks saw the main body of the enemy advancing down the slope in open order, and it was not until he regained his former position, that Col. Denis saw his critical condition. In the meantime Lieut. Robb took in the situation. He saw that the enemy would be at the dock before the Canadians could board the tug, and that the *Robb* would fall into their hands, the prisoners would be released and probably much blood shed, so he cast off from shore to mid-stream. It was well that that course was pursued, for Col. Dennis had barely taken a position, when the enemy opened a brisk fire. The first to feel the effects of the volley was Capt. King whose left ankle was shattered and he fell to the dock. The main body of the enemy was approaching on the double, the green flag of Ireland was floating in the light breeze. As one of our men wrote to me some years ago, did you see the black flag? (he mistook green for black) and wasn't it a terrible thing to look into the muzzles of their guns? The man who wrote that was a recruit, having joined the battery the previous day, and the climax of his experience was, that he was compelled to surrender. The rifle balls were flying fast and furious, but, as yet no one but Capt. King had felt the effects. What's the matter, no orders are given to return the fire? The reason was that the Commander, who would take no person's advice, had sought his personal safety by flight; he was nowhere to be seen. Capt. McCallum was the next senior officer, and he gave orders to fire, mind you, the men in the ranks during this painful and precarious time were standing to attention, and not a man had moved from the ranks.

The men responded to the order fire and load, fired and loaded, but the odds were too great, and to the left where the ranks were the heaviest pressed, they broke and retreated, this example was followed by the remainder. A number of the retreating force entered a frame building, but they concluded it was better to stay in the open and retreat, than to be hemmed in in such a precarious position. Those men were successful in making their escape, others took up a position in a frame building, attracting the fire of the enemy, which greatly helped their comrades to escape injury. This building was located on the main street, facing the river. Firing now had become general, but a number had lagged behind, and an incident took place which is well worth repeating. The writer saw it, one of the batterymen had been wounded, and laid across the track where waggons go, this man was John Harbison, who was wounded in the leg; another batteryman, Joseph Reavley, in stepping over the prostrate body of his comrade, met with a mishap, his busby had fallen backward from his head and was too dear a treasure to lose. Joseph went back and secured his head gear. but he was too late to gain entrance to the house, as the last man who entered was myself. A comrade, John Thomas Boyle, bolted the door, but as there were large piles of cordwood on the opposite side of the street, gunner Reavley made them his place of defence, and after a stern resistance he was captured. The men in the house fired and returned the fire of the enemy, the bullets of the enemys rifles passed through the thin wooden walls as if they were made of paper. The bullets whizzed in all directions, coming from the four points of the compass, knocking plaster from the walls, which raised large quantities of dust. This state of affairs was kept up until the last of the supply of ammunition was exhausted, and after the

firing ceased from those within, the enemy still kept up the fusilade, and to cap the climax, stove in the window sashes and panes of glass on the ground floor with butt end of their rifles, the glass making a hideous noise as the floor was struck by them. It was a delicate situation for those under the roof of that building. Lieut. Macdonald, who was leaning against the door casing, was informed that the ammunition was exhausted; indeed he need not require to be told, for firing had ceased took his white handkerchief from his pocket and handing it to one of his own men, Abraham Thewlis, told him to go out that we capitulate. Mr. Thewlis said afterwards that if Col. O'Neil, the Fenian officer, commanding, had not been present he would have been roughly handled, as our men had done considerable infliction of injuries to men in their ranks. It was never learned how many of the enemy were killed and wounded in this engagement, for they did not tell and no one was present other than themselves, when the dead were buried, but a number of them were wounded.

The officers and men were crest fallen when the former had to give up their swords and the latter their firearms. The officers were marched to the residence of Dr. Kempson, Reeve of the village, which the Fenian army officers made their temporary headquarters. The non-commissioned officers and men were relieved of their rifles and carbines, and after being put in small squads, were marched up the main street of the village, the Fenian army taking precaution that none of these men should escape, for they were in front, at the sides, and in the rear of these different squads, when the head of this body of men reached the street opposite to the residence of the United States Counsel a halt was made and the Fenian flag bearer was a conspicuous figure. That man did not evacuate the country, for he was made a prisoner by

the incoming troops on Sunday morning, and, who gave his name as Francis King, of New Orleans, La. Thousands of people lined the docks on the opposite side of the Niagara River, at Black Rock and Buffalo, and cheer after cheer came from their throats at the victory of the Irish army. There was no doubt of the people who cheered, they were either Fenians or Fenian sympathizers. The prisoners were marched to the ruins of old Fort Erie, on the shore of Lake Erie, which was to be their temporary abode, having the canopy of Heaven for a roof, and if one went to sleep, to have a pillow made of stone. It was not long after the arrival at the old fort when some civilians made their appearance. These men were either newspaper reporters, correspondents or journalists, at all events the prisoners names were taken. The Fenian army had brought a few of their captives from the field of Ridgeway when they marched to Fort Erie.

PRISONERS,

WELLAND CANAL FIELD BATTERY.

Capt. R. S. King, M.D., First Lieut. A. K. Scholfield, Second Lieut. C. B. Nimmo, Sergt.-Major R. Boyle, Farrier Sergt. I. Pew, Sergt. Gideon Grisdale, Sergt. James Coleman, Corporals Stephen Beatty, James H. Boyle, Villroy McKee; Trumpeter John Waters, Privates Slade S. Radcliff, Joseph Reavley, Samuel Cook, William H. Clarke, William Cook, J. Ward Hagar, Jacob Garner, Robert Offspring, Patrick Roach, Samuel Dickinson, Isaac Dickinson, William Broom, Charles Campbell, Morris Weaver, Edward Armstrong, Robert Armstrong, John T. Boyle, Fergus Scholfield, John Bradley, John Harbison.

Of the above were wounded, Capt. King, gunners Fergus Scholfield, John Bradley, John Harbison and Robert J. Thomas. The last named was successful in his retreat.—31.

NAVAL BRIGADE OF DUNNVILLE

Second Lieut. Angus Macdonald, privates Thomas Arderlay, Abraham Thewlis, G. B. McGee, James H. Gamble, Harry Neff—6.

When Capt. King received his wound it was not his intention to fall into the hands of the enemy as it was apparent, so he rolled along the dock and got into the water of the river, where he held himself to one of the spiles. The enemy had been keeping watch and fished him out. Dr. Minor crossed over from Buffalo and having gained Col. O'Neil's consent took the wounded officer to his home where the leg was amputated below the knee. Of the men Scholfield, Bradley and Harbison, the first two named had each a leg amputated. Harbison's wound was dressed on Sunday morning by doctors Kempson and Elliott.

We parted from the tug *Robb* in our narrative when she left the dock. She went with the current down the river so that, if need be, she could be of assistance. As Capt. McCallum was making a successful effort in his retreat, an armed Fenian was crossing a rail fence with the view of either capturing or wounding him, when one of the brigade, Kalback by name, and who had seen service in the United States Army, though a Canadian, went for the enemy and with terrible words from his lips, plunged his bayonet through the Fenian's neck, who fell from the fence and expired shortly afterwards. The *Robb* picked up Capt. McCallum and a number of the men of both Canadian companies and retraced its course up the river. Passing Fort Erie all was quiet at the house that had so recently been occupied, and the surmise was that all the men who had taken their position in it were killed. The Fenians opened fire on the tug but no injury was inflicted, though a rifle ball passed through the window of the wheel-house close to Lieut. Robb's head. When the *Robb* reached Port Colborne that evening Capt. McCallum turned the Fenian prisoners

over to Lieut.-Col. Wm. McGiverin, M. P. P., commanding the 20th Lincoln Battalion, who forwarded them to Brantford jail, sending a sufficient number of his own men to carry out his orders. When the prisoners at old Fort Erie heard the firing they concluded there was relief at hand, thinking that Col. Peacocke had arrived, but their hopes were put to flight when firing ceased. The air was now beginning to feel chilly and great coats were needed. The day had been exceedingly hot. Permission was obtained from Col O'Neil for a few of the prisoners to secure the great coats, but on their arrival at the custom house they found the doors locked and no officers to be found, so they returned without them. The dew fell and at midnight the grass or grain was as damp as if a shower of rain had fallen. About three o'clock on Sunday morning the prisoners were ordered to march, and it was not long until the well-known dock was reached, where a steam tug with a flat bottom boat were tied up. The Fenians told us that we were at liberty to go where we pleased; they got on the boats and the country was evacuated. But their triumph did not last long, for, presently the boom of a cannon—another boom—was heard; it was the United States war steamer *Michigan* coming up the river and took both boats into custody in the name of the United States Government and cast anchor in mid-stream.

After Capt. McCallum's return to Port Colborne the news was spread broadcast that on account of the desolate condition of the Lewis house or post office building at Fort Erie, that the men who were in it had been killed, there was great lamentations for some one had relatives who were claimed as among the dead. Those fears and lamentations were set at rest upon the arrival at home of some of the late prisoners. A few of the men who remained at Fort Erie was your humble servant and with him were Corporals J. H. Boyle and McKee and gunner Garner, Lieuts. Scholfield and Nimmo also remained.

LIEUT.-COL. DENNIS

It becomes necessary to recall the name of Lieut.-Col. J. Stoughten Dennis. I do not want to get his name mixed with or for Denison, is the reason I put it thus. When that officer left his men he retreated northward and some people said he took shelter in a hay loft, but according to gunner Robert J. Thomas it was in a house that he went and was followed in by Thomas. This soldier had received a slight wound in one of his hips on his retreat and he went up stairs to dress it. While doing this there were great rappings on the doors below. People demanded admittance but no noise came from the inside. Some time afterwards there was another series of knocks and later on other knocks, but no attention was paid to them. The Fenians said they knew a British officer was within and they wanted him, but they did not force an entrance. Meanwhile Col. Dennis was taking measures to ensure his escape from being taken a prisoner of war. He had been proud of a magnificent pair of side whiskers, but now they are gone, so is his military uniform. With a well worn suit of civilian's clothes, with a bandana handkerchief tied about his neck and with a cloth cap, the peak well drawn down over his face, that gallant officer sallied forth when the coast was clear and successfully reached Col. Peacocke's camp early on the following morning. Gunner Thomas was also successful in his retreat, reaching his home near Port Robinson early on Sunday morning.

MAJOR GEORGE T. DENISON

Major, now Colonel George T. Denison, now Police Magistrate of Toronto, crossed over by steamer from that city on Saturday morning to Port Dalhousie with his troop of cavalry, known as the "Governor-General's Body Guard," and marching to Port Robinson, they went to Chippawa and following the trail of Col. Peacocke's troops reached

his camp at dusk. On Sunday morning that gallant officer and his troop entered Fort Erie and made their quarters for breakfast at Henry Fitch's hotel, the "City."

OTHER SOLDIERS ARRIVE.

Col. Lowry, a war veteran who had been in the Crimea 1854-6, left Toronto on Saturday with sections of the British army and a number of companies of Canadian Volunteer Militiamen and after considerable trouble and disadvantages reached Fort Erie about nine o'clock a.m., the troops pitching their tents in the background on the slope leading to the village, and at about eleven o'clock the force was increased by the arrival of Col. Peacocke, who had made a thorough search through the neighborhood and succeeded in capturing a number of the straggling enemy. Capt. Stoker, with the St. Catharines Garrison Artillery, arrived at the same time. In the afternoon the Queen's Own Rifle Battalion came down from Port Colborne to form a portion of the force.

OTHER EVENTS

It was not long after that Col. Lowry made his appearance in Fort Erie when he crossed to the United States war steamer *Michigan* to interview Capt. Bryson. The result was that free intercourse was re-established between the Canadian and American people. Many crossed from Buffalo to look at what had occurred and to see the men who were in the village who had been in the fight the previous day.

Capt. Bryson received instructions from Washington, D. C., United States capitol, to let all prisoners go on parole, excepting the officers, but after a few days they also were paroled.

THE PAROLE

The following was the statement made by the men who were paroled: "We the undersigned, belonging to the Fenian Brotherhood, being now assembled in

Buffalo with intentions which have been decided by the United States authorities as inviolation of the neutrality laws of the United States, but being desirous now to return to our homes, do severally agree and promise to abandon our expedition against Canada, desist from any of the neutrality laws of the United States and return immediately to our respective homes.

Extract, Buffalo, N.Y., June 15, 1866: It is interesting, as showing the widely separated points from which the Fenian Army was drawn, to note the destinations of the men, thus ingloriously sent to their homes like paupers, instead of the high-flown crusaders of a few days before. This is the list of passes issued to the Fenians: For Cleveland, 23; for Milwaukee, 29; for Chicago, 623; for Detroit, 1; for Jackson, 1; for Oil City, Pa., 37; for Pittsburg, Pa., 146; for La Porte, 15; for Nashville, Tenn., 5; for Dansville, Ill., 32; for St. Louis, Mo., 63; for Meadsville, Pa., 22; for Cincinnati, 259; for Louisville, Ky., 122; for Indianapolis, Indiana, 23; Peoria, Ill., 62; for Terre Haute, Texas, 12; for Fort Wayne 31; for other points 60; a grand total of 1566.

Can any person wonder after reading the above figures how a body of sixty-six men should be placed in the open field against such overwhelming odds, is it not a wonder that the few who were compelled to surrender resisted as long as they did, and is it not surprising that any of the men came out alive. Think of 66 versus, 1566, more than 20 to 1 at the beginning and at the close more than 40 to 1.

On Sunday afternoon the tug *W. T. Robb* again visited Fort Erie. She was not on a war but a peace mission. The wounded soldiers Scholfield, Bradley and Harbison were carried down and placed on deck. The officers and such of the men who had remained were embarked and with thousands of spectators to witness the departure, not a sound was heard, the grave conditions of the wounded prevented a demonstration. On the arrival at Port Colborne another multitude had assembled to witness the disembarking. Bradley and Harbison were carried to the temporary hospital, where the wounded of Ridgeway had been taken. Gunner Scholfield was taken to the home of his uncle, Mr. Thomas Scholfield, the reeve of the village.

A few days later the sailors who belonged to the corp rejoined it, they having been on the lakes during the trouble. Recruits came in and the battery came to the required strength. The delayed implements of war, the cannons, were shipped to and arrived in Port Colborne during the week; horses were procured and a general training followed. On July fourth false rumors were circulated and the garrison was alert, but nothing came of it. Orders were received the following day that the men would be relieved on the sixth from duty. During the stay at Port Colborne Lieut.-Col. Dennis had the impudence to take a look at the men who he had gotten entrapped on June 2, but it was at long range.

GRANTS OF LAND, SWORDS AND MEDALS.

The Municipal Council of the County of Welland, Edward Lee, Reeve of the Township of Wainfleet, Warden, assembled at Welland in special session to pay their respects and to recognize the services of the men, who, at great sacrifice to themselves, in that county for the defence and honor of Canada, the Council deemed fitting that some marks of approval should emanate from them to those men who had battled against such odds. It was concurred in that a sword be presented to Capt. King and Capt. McCallum each, that each other commissioned officer, the non-commissioned officers and the men of the two corps each be presented with a suitable medal, the name of the receiver engraved thereon, and in addition to the above 100 acres of the county lands in the Great Cranberry Marsh be donated to each of the four wounded.

The Municipal Corporation of the Village of Fort Erie was willing to do its share of recognition of worth. They presented Capt. King with a very valuable sword, handsomely engraved, which was presented to him on his return to his home in Port Robinson.

When the County Council of Welland County learned that no person or persons but her Majesty could bestow medals for deeds of war, they memorialized the Queen to confirm their act so that the men could wear their medals when dressed in uniform, which she was pleased to do.

CAPTAIN KING RETURNS HOME.

When Capt. King's wound had sufficiently recovered he came to Port Robinson on a steam

yacht. A large number of people had assembled to pay their respects to the man who was brave, and who had sacrificed so much for the country of his adoption. The Capt. in returning thanks for the demonstration of good will, accused Lieut. Col. Dennis with being a poltroon and coward. Those words came to the knowledge of that officer; he demanded and got a Court of Enquiry. Some days before the opening of the Court, Col. Dennis went among the least injurious to him, members of the battery, to know what each one of them had to say, and after feeling the grounds under him, went away satisfied that he would be acquitted of blame.

COURT OF ENQUIRY.

The Court of Enquiry sat at the village of Fort Erie, in the City hotel, being composed of three Lieut.-Colonels of the Artillery, and whether by oversight or design, none of the witnesses most incriminating to Lieut.-Colonel Dennis were called. I was detailed to go and take six men to Court. We arrived at the appointed time, but not one of us was called until the second day. The only man of the battery who was called as a witness had not stopped to see the finish, but myself, Boyle, Garner and McKee who were through it all were not asked to testify. The result of this investigation was that the accused officer was acquitted, and the stigma rested on Capt. King for uttering the words he did.

PRESENTATIONS.

At that same time there was a great demonstration at Port Robinson, swords were presented to Captains King and McCallum, the medals were handed over to the remaining officers and men, excepting the belated ones from the Court, who received them on their arrival, and the deeds for the land were delivered to the four invalided soldiers, and the affair winding up with a supper and dance, excepting the Dunnville people, who left for their homes shortly after the presentation ceremonies were ended.

SPECIAL COURT OF ASSIZES

All of the men who had been interested as participants or suspects were taken to Toronto, when a special Court of Assizes was held during the following winter. Among those who were captured and tried were Francis King, the flag bearer, and John Gallagher, who stood sentry at old Fort Erie on June 2, both of whom had been made prisoners by the incoming troops on June 3, and Daniel Drummond, who were convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment in the Provincial Penitentiary at Kingston, but who were liberated some eighteen months later.

RIDGEWAY.

Though the following does not form a part of the operations of the Welland Canal Field Battery, and Naval Brigade of Dunnville, it is not deemed amiss to present the accompanying statement to the readers, which is to be hoped will be interesting.

To the memory of some of the brave Canadians who lost their lives at the battle of Ridgeway in the Fenian Raid of 1866.

The Village of Ridgeway is about eight miles east of Port Colborne, on the Buffalo, Brantford and Goderich Railway, now forming the southern line of the Grand Trunk System.

At the time we speak of there were two churches in the village (1874), they are both Methodist, but one is known as the Memorial Methodist Church, on account of the tablet being erected in it. The pastor of this church was the Rev. T. M. Campbell, who at present resides in Toronto, and is retired from active work in the ministry, having been superannuated. This clergyman was the principal mover in the object, and he had many supporters. The base of the tablet was laid on the 15th of September, 1874 under the auspices of the Grand Lodge, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Canada. The ceremony was very imposing, and the proceedings were participated in by a large number of the fraternity, comprising members from the lodges of Dunnville, Port Dalhousie, Welland, Cayuga, Port Colborne, Ridgeway, Fonthill, Caledonia and other places, who turned out in large numbers. The Grand Lodge was opened by R. W. Bro. D. E. Broderick of Caledonia, Acting Grand Master; R. W. Bro. I. P. Willson of Welland, as D. D. G. M.; W. Bro. John Parry of Dunnville, as G. S. W.; V. W. Bro. Joseph Hurshell of Cayuga, as G. J. W.; W. Bro. John Frazer, M. D., of Fonthill, as G. Treasurer; Rev. Bro. T. M. Campbell of Ridgeway, as G. Chaplain; V. W. Bro. S. Braund of Dunnville, as G. D. of Ceremonies; Bro. J. W. McCarthy of Ridgeway, as G. Secretary; W. Bros. Fullman and Morin, as G. S. and G. J. Deacons, and V. W. Bro. Abraham Bronson of Dunnville, as Grand Superintendent of Works.

The procession was formed outside the hall whence the brethren marched to the church which contained many spectators. After the opening ode which was performed by Miss Willson of Ridgeway, at the organ, R. W. Bro. Broderick, with the officers, whose duty it was to assist in the work, proceeded to the scene of their labor, the base of the tablet, situated at the south of and adjoining the pulpit.

Suitable tackling had been adjusted and the ceremony of laying the base was duly performed, during which the assembled brethren and audience joined in singing the National Anthem.

The scroll read by Bro. McCarthy, acting Grand Secretary, and deposited at the foot of the tablet, had written upon it the following:

IN MEMORIAM.

BATTLE OF RIDGEWAY AND ITS VICTIMS.

"On the night of May 31st, 1866, a company of vulgar and wicked men, called Fenians, crossed the river at Fort Erie into Canada. They were armed and evidently intended to make war upon the country. On the morning of June 2 they were met near the crossing of the ridge and garrison roads by a detachment of the Second Regiment (Queen's Own), under command of Major—now Lieutenant-Colonel—Gilmor; a detachment of the 13th Battalion of Hamilton, under Lieut.-Col. Booker, and the York Company, under Capt. Davis, when some slight skirmishing took place. Owing to some slight mistake in the command, the Volunteers were thrown into confusion and compelled to retire. A few hours subsequent re-inforcements arrived, when the Fenians, becoming alarmed, fled to the Frontier and, recrossing the river, escaped. It was a brief war, but it left sad memories. In the skirmish which took place nine brave men laid on their country's altar a soldier's costliest offering. They are not, but their deeds glve an inspiration of patriotism still, and their memory is sacred throughout the land."

The citizens of this community, to perpetuate the memories and tell the rising generation who they were and what they did, have procured a marble tablet bearing the following inscription :

SACRED TO THE MEMORY

OF THE

RIDGEWAY MARTYRS

WHO FELL DEFENDING THEIR COUNTRY IN THE
ATTEMPTED FENIAN INVASION, JUNE, 1866.

MALCOLM McEACHREN,
Ensign, Queen's Own, killed,

HUGH MATHESON,
Sergeant, Queen's Own, died of wounds.

CHRISTOPHER ANDERSON,
Queen's Own, killed.

FRANCIS LAKEY,
Corporal, Queen's Own, died of wounds.

WILLIAM F. TEMPEST,
Queen's Own, killed.

WILLIAM SMITH,
Queen's Own, killed.

J. H. MEWBURN,
Queen's Own, killed.

MARK DEFRIES,
Queen's Own, killed.

MALCOLM MCKENZIE,
Queen's Own, killed.

Go, strew his ashes to the wind,
Whose sword or voice have served mankind ;
And is he dead ? whose glorious mind
Lift him on high ;
To live in hearts we leave behind
Is not to die.

Erected by citizens in the vicinity of the
battle ground, 1874.

To pay a greater tribute of homage to deserved worth, the Chaplet of A.F. & A.M. to-day, and at the foot of the tomb and the labors of the craft, cheerfully given to lay suitably the base of this tablet.

In the name and by the favor of the Glorious Architect of Heaven and Earth, on the 15th day of September, 1874, and of the era of Masonry, A. L., 5874, and in the 38th year of our Most Gracious Sovereign, Queen Victoria, the Right Honourable Sir Frederick Temple, Earl of Dufferin, K.P., K.C.B., etc., Governor-General of Canada; the Hon. Alexander McKenzie, Premier of Canada; the Hon. William Crawford, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario; the Hon. Oliver Mowat, Premier of Ontario; Edwin Hershey, Reeve of this Township; and E. A. Dickout, Deputy Reeve; Rev. Metcalf Campbell, pastor of this Church.

This tablet was laid by R. W. Bro. D. E. Broderick, Esq., D.D.G.M., of the Niagara District, assisted by Grand Officers and Brethren from various parts of the Province, and especially of Dominion Lodge, No. 213, W. Bro. J. N. Fullman, W. M.

May the G.A.O.T.U. smile on our undertaking.

After the conclusion of the ceremony, Miss Thompson of Fort Erie rendered the "Officer's Funeral," a piece of music appropriately chosen for the occasion, and the proceedings were brought to a close by brief and appropriate addresses by Bros. John Parry, I. P. Willson and R. Balfour.

